

Neighborhood patrol helps cut crime

Breaking and entering. It's a devastating experience especially when it hits home or the homes of friends, relatives and neighbors. Some areas are worse than others and some residents are more concerned than others about their property and the safety of the surrounding area. Lois Vitale, vendor audit, is one of those concerned people. She's part of a Madison Heights neighborhood watch program that was started up in February after a barrage of B&E's was recorded in her immediate area.

"There were about 14 B&E's in our neighborhood in January. One of the residents, Marty Steel, decided that he

wanted to do something, so I jumped right in too," Vitale explains. "Now there are 17 of us in the group. We patrol every night from six to nine and from eight to 12."

The area patrolled extends from I-696 to Lincoln Avenue and from John R to Dequindre.

All of those involved in the watch program are employed family people with children, who have taken a great interest in keeping the streets clean.

"I feel strongly about this program," Vitale says. "I believe in it and support it wholeheartedly."

There are always two people in a patrol vehicle and they rarely get out even if they see trouble. Most of their work is done by driving up and down the streets at 10 miles per hour, using CB's to communicate and taking notes concerning things like strange parked cars in front of darkened homes. If something does occur when no one is around, the group

members can refer back to their notes and possibly help track down any intruders.

"We are not a vigilante group. We carry no weapons. But we do try to have CB's in our cars so that if something does happen we can get in contact with someone," Vitale explains.

"We do other things for the people, too. We try to have friendly community relations by waving to everybody as we drive by. And if we see that someone has left their car lights on, we'll go up to their front door and tell them so they don't run their battery down."

Since this is a self contained group, they must purchase all equipment themselves or rely on donations. They are now in need of over 15 new or used CB's for their group and are hoping community members will donate any unused CB's that they may have. Through the donations of residents and area factories, the watch program was able to purchase some neighborhood watch signs to place throughout the area.

While the Madison Heights police department is in no way connected to Vitale's group, they have told her that because of the watch program, B&E's have gone down 36 percent since the program was instituted.

"We'll keep this program up until we aren't bothered much any more, probably a year or two," Vitale says.



Health tips

Migraine and Food Allergy

The cause of migraine headaches remains a mystery, even though medications can usually be relied upon to get rid of them quite quickly whenever they appear. Nevertheless, in a group of 99 children with frequent migraine, *POSTGRADUATE MEDICINE* (75:4:221, 1984) reports, about 85% were relieved of their headaches after being kept on a diet containing only those substances to which almost no one ever becomes allergic. Thereafter, usual foods were added back to the diet one at a time and in this way, it was possible to find a food that caused a relapse in 90% of the cases.

"Trigger" foods in their descending order of importance were cow's milk, egg, chocolate, orange, wheat, benzoic acid (a preservative), cheese, tomato, tartrazine

(the food-coloring agent "Yellow dye #5"), rye, fish, pork, beef, corn and soy. Since many children do not get a headache for two to seven days after exposure to the trigger foodstuff, these dietary tests are often so difficult to interpret that they are really not too helpful.

The alternative method of investigation, skin testing, is also not very sensitive or reliable. For these reasons, it is often better to go ahead and try a diet that is free of all known trigger foods, without even attempting to discover which one (or ones) is causing the trouble.

Aspirin and Food Allergy

A 14-year-old boy who had suffered from eczema, asthma, and hay fever since infancy had also experienced mild tingling and swelling of the face every time he ate something containing peanuts. This reaction had always been mild and

disappeared in about 15 minutes without any special treatment. On the last occasion that he ate something containing peanuts, however, he had also taken two aspirin tablets earlier the same day. Five minutes after eating a small portion of peanut-flavored cake, he suddenly collapsed and was taken to a hospital where he urgently needed treatment for shock. The young man, it should be noted, was not allergic to aspirin.

This report from the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* (288:755, 1984) illustrates how aspirin greatly augments the effect of food allergens. Aspirin does this by increasing the permeability of the stomach and intestine so that more of any allergy-producing food can become absorbed. Accordingly, the *JOURNAL* recommends people who have even the mildest of allergies to food must be warned that they could have a very dangerous reaction if they take the offending allergen and aspirin within several hours of each other.